THE New Republic

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By Walter Laqueur

MAY 6, 1957

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Washington Wire

In Name Only

ONE OF THE most tragic decisions in modern times was President Eisenhower's to run again. Knowing his own physical condition he permitted his supposed friends to deceive him. He won them the election and now they are deserting him. It is doubtful if he has the will or energy to regain leadership. He plays golf, goes on vacation and husbands his strength. He proposes legislation and does not fight for it. He offers moral precepts—and appoints Scott McLeod ambassador.

In Congress they do not attack Eisenhower; they ignore him. The very kindness of his opponents is their sharpest criticism. Eisenhower goes through the motions of being President, but how much power he has nobody can say.

Strong-man George Humphrey is leaving the Cabinet. After wrecking the budget he has little more to offer. Eisenhower (who should have angrily kicked him out last January) will be sorry to see him go.

Sen. William Jenner (R, Ind.), who hates every liberal thing Eisenhower stands for, has the gall to appear at the White House asking re-election support. No promise now, but probably he will get it. There are seven other GOP Senate reactionaries up in 1958; all hate "modern Republicanism"; save for McCarthy, he will probably support them all.

The Old Guard Laughs

IN CONGRESS men fight for Eisenhower's program while he is silent. Liberal Labor Secretary James Mitchell and Welfare Secretary Marion Folsom battled against "economy" cuts in the House—against Republicans! Sample line-ups: Against a slash in the Women's Bureau (D's 2-to-1 against, R's 2-to-1 for). Against a slash in the Labor Department's Wage-Hour Division (D's 2-to-1 against, R's almost 3-to-1 for). Against a slash in the Food and Drug Administration (D's 6-to-1 against, R's 99-to-94 for). Against a cut for the Office of Education (D's 2-to-1 against, R's 2-to-1 for). Against a slash in funds to states for sewage plant construction (D's 6-to-1 against, R's 2-to-1 for). In every case Republicans voted against the President, while Democrats tried to carry the ball for him.

This isn't all, of course. The Old Guard—elections over—openly ridicules poor Eisenhower's "modern Republicanism." Senator Goldwater (R, Ariz.) denounces it; Senator Curtis (R, Neb.) says the "heart and core" of his party is "disappointed"; GOP leaders Knowland and Bridges fight foreign aid. Eisenhower's own brother, Edgar, attacks the budget.

How about the old Eisenhower program, the "great crusade"? He set his goal at a "$60 billion" budget; well, that didn't happen. He charged Truman "deliberately" planned inflation; prices today are at an all-time high. In agriculture prices are 15 percent lower than when he took office, surpluses three times as large; the government spent more for farms in the first four years under Eisenhower than in the preceding 20 years.

The last thing we desire is to twit or taunt the President. We hate to think of his feelings as the men who told him to run again desert him. He still worships the tycoons, the captains of industry—but where are the NAM and the Chamber of Commerce now? Possibly he can still pull things together on his return to Washington, from vacation, and we hope so for stalemate is dangerous. But as it looks to us now, the Administration's cohesion is like a cigarette on the street, shredding in the rain.

The Canadian Threat

UP NORTH in Canada they have just given the green light to another radical piece of social legislation — one you won't read about much in US newspapers. This column has many times observed that the real threat to US institutions is from Canada, not Russia. Now our dreadful neighbor plans to provide hospital insurance for its citizens. Taxes will be imposed, and the expense shared by the dominion and provincial governments. No longer need any Canadian citizen die because he can't afford a hospital. Every right-thinking US citizen knows that this is folly and a further example of reckless spendthriftism. It is a further affront to the US that the Canadian dollar is worth more than ours under the Republicans. The best way of meeting the situation, we say, is to ignore it.

Help Wanted

THE WHITE HOUSE is getting ready to pack another agency. Eisenhower's first appointee to the three-man TVA, Gen. Herbert Vogel, has been constantly outvoted by the other two. Vogel favored the Dixon-Yates grab; the others didn't. But now on May 10 another vacancy in TVA occurs. This appointment will give the Administration control. The difficulty is that the job requires a peculiar flexibility of mind. Congress wrote specific injunctions into the act that TVA members must swear they believe in the principle of the nation's mighty electric yardstick. We suggest the following advertisement:

> MAN WANTED: TVA member; high position, low pay. Must be able to take oath of office that he believes in TVA project—with reservation that he considers it "creeping socialism." Should be non-political (as required by law) and a staunch Republican. Should support public power, with provision that private utilities come first.

Incidentally, this is one of the few jobs we know where an American must take an oath regarding certain beliefs (apart from loyalty) to get a job. In the old days in England, of course, a Protestant oath was essential. Under the circumstances the Administration may find it hard to get just the right man. Eisenhower refused to reappoint Gordon Clapp who had proved his loyalty to his oath almost too strongly. He picked General Vogel instead.

In Washington when you fire a slingshot you have to wait for a minute to see who says "Ouch"; in this case it's the business organizations not labor, which oppose federal protection of welfare and pension funds growing out of the racket inquiry; business wants to be let alone.

T.R.B.

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The New Republic

A JOURNAL OF OPINION

MAY 6, 1957

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Disarmament Talks

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S reported optimism about the UN arms-limitation talks in London is thus far supported by little but Harold Stassen's perennial confidence that something will turn up. True, there are hints that the UN Disarmament Subcommittee, after three years of negotiating at more than 100 sessions, has brought two East-West agreements within reach. These new possibilities, however, reflect no new accommodation between the Russians and ourselves. Rather, they confirm that the arms race has reached an equilibrium or plateau in several respects. What is most likely to come out of London is an agreement to stop at the place where both sides intend to stop anyway: a realistic recognition of a *fait accompli*. Last year the Soviet Union announced in the UN Disarmament Commission that it was ready to accept the conventional troop levels proposed by the Western powers: 2.5 million men for the US, USSR and Communist China each; and 750,000 for Britain and 750,000 for France. Both the Soviets and the US have been cutting back their troop strength unilaterally until today they are not much higher than these proposed levels. Britain has gone further and announced its intention to halve the 750,000 figure. No sacrifice of fighting strength is involved, since lesser manpower is counterbalanced by greater firepower. The only purpose of the freeze is to test the workability of a Russian-Western arms agreement.

In prospect also is a second and more difficult freeze on the size of nuclear weapons stockpiles. It is believed that both the US and the USSR already possess the weapons-grade nuclear fuel they need. A cutoff in military fuel manufacture, say in 1958, would still leave both nations ample reserves. The proposed agreement now being discussed in London would establish a worldwide inspection system to assure that all *new* fissionable material after that date goes to non-military use. It would also prevent countries which do not now possess nuclear weapons from making them. The US has always been worried about the "fourth country" problem. The Russians appear to have begun to be worried about it in the past year, since the last previous disarmament talks in March, 1956.

Word from London indicates no progress toward agreement on nuclear weapons tests, nor on any zonal limitation of armaments (as has been proposed for Central Europe), nor on an inspection system to prevent surprise attack. American diplomatic rigidity seems to preclude a full discussion of the first two, and Russian intransigence the third. Nor is there any immediate prospect of agreement on banning or controlling the testing or manufacture of intercontinental ballistic missiles, though both the US and USSR have been receptive to the international sharing of information on space satellite and other space vehicles, peacetime cousins of the ICBM.

Whatever token agreements Harold Stassen obtains in the next few weeks will be welcome. Yet the areas where agreement is most probable

A Communication

► *What did Halle say?*

SIRS:

I AGREE with much that Mr. Crewson advanced in your correspondence columns last week in criticism of what he thinks my article said. An examination of the article, however, will show that it did not say it. ("The Eisenhower Approach—McCarthy and Nasser," *NR*, April 8).

The comparison of McCarthy and Nasser was limited to the fact that both have presented the Eisenhower Administration with the problem of aggressive encroachment by men who accept no limits.

The answer to the question whether Nasser is responsible for the many problems of the Middle East is *no*. The article did not say he was.

Next question: Would a clash with

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are not those which arouse the greatest anxiety, nor do they cover aspects of the arms race which are most costly in the national budgets of the US and USSR.

Clearly the two super-powers will be forced to show greater flexibility in their approach to disarmament before there can be real meaning to Secretary Dulles' declaration to the annual Associated Press luncheon: "We consider that control and reduction of arms are possible, desirable, and, in the last reckoning indispensable."

Next to Last Words

SIX MONTHS ago, a bit flushed by the warmth of the political campaign, President Eisenhower uttered what he said was his "last word" on a proposal to halt nuclear bomb tests. But this was a horse that wouldn't lie down and die, even on Presidential orders. It has been kicked to life again and again—by the Pope, by Nobel Peace Prize winner Albert Schweitzer, and by numerous nuclear scientists of both Britain and the US.

So it is not surprising that the President's subordinates have been busy supplementing his last words with new last words. The latest is Atomic Energy Commissioner Willard Libby, himself a nuclear chemist, who has sent Dr. Schweitzer a 2,000-page letter reassuring him that in fact the danger to health from radioactive fallout is not really serious, and who delivered a scholarly 31-page report on the same subject to the American Physical Society on April 26.

In his report Dr. Libby addresses himself directly to the substance of the editorial in last week's *New Republic*: that while the *average* worldwide hazard from strontium-90, a cancer-causing element in bomb debris, may be far below the presently accepted danger level, nevertheless the wide difference in soil conditions and individual susceptibility can make fallout a danger to individuals, long before the average danger level is reached.

Professor Libby's answer: that "among people living in a given locality, only one person in about 700 will have more than twice the average strontium-90 burden." Professor Libby also looked into the greater strontium hazard in some localities, due to low calcium content in the soil which causes vegetables and dairy cows to pick up greater amounts of strontium-90. Dr. Libby concluded: "Direct measurements have shown that a factor of five encompasses the total variation due to all factors." In other words, a person living in some localities could pick up five times more strontium.

Professor Libby's findings are more conservative than those of three Columbia University scientists, who published their worldwide study of human bones in *Science* magazine of February 8. They established a theoretical variability of 10 to 100 times more strontium in some localities than others, and tested one bone from a 1955 human autopsy in Western Canada containing 50 times the world average.

This journal is not qualified to set itself up as arbiter on what scientific data is correct. But with scientists differing on so fundamental an issue affecting the human race, we believe it ill becomes a trained scientist to assert so dogmatically that (in Professor Libby's words): "radioactive fallout from nuclear tests is not, nor is it ever likely to be, the danger to the human race . . . which many people have been led to believe."

Moreover, Professor Libby qualifies his "no danger" assurance with the inconspicuous phrase "at the current rate of testing," or average of the past five years. Yet five series of tests have been held or scheduled for 1956-57, and the prospect of additional nations entering the nuclear test field is not closed.

The decision of the Eisenhower Administration that nuclear tests must go on would be more acceptable if it were accompanied by American leadership in a drive to reduce fallout, whether by banning only megaton-size bomb tests, or "dirty bomb tests" (those which maximize debris when the fireball touches the ground).

East-West Trade

NEGOTIATIONS about to begin in Paris on revision of the trade lists agreed among the Western allies in dealings with the Soviet Union and Communist China deserve the closest attention. The suggestion that they are unimportant because the volume of trade affected is economically insignificant is quite off the mark. Real issues of first importance are raised by the fact that the 15 nations now joined in a voluntary system of permissions and proscriptions are to have a new go at this.

There is a question whether in this matter Mr. Eisenhower and his Executive branch are going in the same direction. Another, whether in the Paris meetings the United States acts in a spirit of genuine accommodation with its allies, or the spirit of a shell game. Another, whether a start is to be made toward a more realistic

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China policy, or at least toward an open mind. Within that one lies another question about Mr. Eisenhower, whether he proposes to lead his party and the Congress and the country, or yield to vocal and conspicuous prejudices which may be quite without popular support. Finally, there is the basic question whether present US trade policy, which has as its aim the strangling of the Red Chinese regime in its early life, has any validity or whether it is in fact self-defeating in the sense that it reinforces, rather than weakens, the ties between the Soviet Union and the Chinese.

The early signs do not promise that the answers are going to be pleasant. The President appears to have decided some time ago that Yankee traders can dare to deal with Communist countries. The Eisenhower-Eden talks at the beginning of 1956 were supposed to lead to a revision of the trade lists so that advantage to the free world could be balanced against restrictions on China. The results have been exactly zero. Tentative proposals by this country for the Paris meetings reportedly seem almost meaningless to the other parties. There is, moreover, a strong feeling that talk here of liberalizing the China list is duplicitous, hiding an intent to trade off useless concessions on China for tighter restrictions on the USSR. This is an intricate editing of secret lists, and it is suspected in Washington that the real goal is a double killing: tighter Chinese lists and tighter Soviet lists.

Although our allies are not at one in their attitudes, a sort of resignation-before-the-fact can be sensed among them, and the best they seem to hope for is something politically attractive (however speciously) to take back to their parliaments, their businessmen, and their workers. No one argues that great amounts of East-West trade are involved. But, it is precisely because the economic issue is really so small that opportunity for a big gesture on the part of the US exists. Flunking the opportunity would be regrettable enough, but if it is done ignobly more than regrets will be in order.

"Let me know when you decide something"

Diem's Success Story

US AID to Viet-Nam over the past three years—approximately $775 million in economic assistance and a somewhat smaller amount in military support for the new Republic—has paid off handsomely. Credit, however, for Viet-Nam's emergence as a stable state after 10 years of exhausting war must go in large part to the Republic's President, Ngo Dinh Diem, who on May 8 comes to Washington for his first visit to America.

"I had always thought of him," said one journalist, "as Per Diem—good only for one day." But Diem has been good now for three years; he has survived the partitioning of Indo-China, a crisis in the Viet-Namese Army, open defiance by armed politico-religious sects, attempts by the former Emperor Bao Dai to strip him of his power, and attempted assassination last February.

There were not many who thought it could be done. Graham Greene in *The New Republic* of April 12, 1954, concluded that "the last performance has begun: a country one has loved is about to retire behind the curtain."

It did not retire, at least the southern part did not, and the Republic that came into being in the South has managed in three years to eliminate the last of French military, economic and bureaucratic influences; to set up its own national army, school system and monetary system; to establish political administration in every part of the country; and to come close to eradicating traditional graft and organized vice.

It has not only adopted a constitution guaranteeing basic human rights, created a multi-party political system and held a national election, but it has moved forward with constructive economic reform. With Wolfe Ladejinsky as his close adviser, Diem has undertaken a land resettlement and reform program under which all holdings of 100 hectares must be sold—through the government—and distributed to landless farmers or those with inadequate holdings. More than 850,000 refugees from the Communist North have been resettled—more than four times the number of refugees who have fled from Hungary since the revolution there last October. In Viet-Nam today there are cooperative and governmental agricultural credit agencies which provide easy credit for the purchase and development

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of new land. Vast areas, heretofore uncultivated, have been opened up. A wide range of technical services are available to the peasants, promoting increased crop yield, better health and sanitation, new breeds of cattle (80 percent of the livestock was slaughtered during the decade of war).

In brief, the Republic of Viet-Nam, having got out from under the colonialism of the French and the neo-colonialism of the Communists, has proved that freedom is a mighty force when it is made to serve the general welfare.

Carey's Resignation

SINCE James Carey resigned from the chairmanship of the AFL-CIO Committee on Civil Rights, the labor federation has maintained an icy silence on why he resigned. At the same time, it has taken two of the very steps which Carey had demanded before he quit.

Energetic and relatively young among union presidents, Carey heads the International Union of Electrical Workers. For years before the merger, he directed the CIO's anti-discrimination committee. During the merger negotiations, the CIO demanded creation of a similar body in the new federation. Shortly after the AFL and the CIO joined, the committee was established, with Carey as its chairman.

Last April 4, during the second of two stormy committee meetings, Carey stepped down from that post. He charged that the unit's effectiveness had been undermined from on high. His indictment was made behind closed doors. President George Meany's rebuttal was also swaddled in secrecy, but fragments of the story have leaked out.

Carey charged, for example, that the Committee had been hamstrung in its attempts to convene a national trade union conference on civil rights. The intended purpose of such a meeting was to help international unions and subordinate bodies create internal machinery for eradicating racial discrimination from their organizations. Some unions, like Carey's own and a few others, have such machinery. Most don't.

According to Carey, repeated efforts were made to call such a meeting. Each time, he charged, Meany failed to issue the official call. But the very afternoon Carey resigned, the committee, with Meany now in the chair, set a new date for the conference, overriding a suggestion for further delay.

The second specific charge made by Carey was that the labor movement had fumbled badly in its handling of a case of anti-Negro discrimination in a Cleveland building trades local. The facts of the case were not in dispute. Local 38 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (not to be confused with Carey's IUE) had even been investigated by the Cleveland Community Relations Board and found guilty of barring Negroes from membership.

Carey charged that lack of assistance from the Meany-directed staff which is supposed to execute federation policy had made it impossible for the committee to act on the matter.

A few days after Carey's resignation, following a meeting between Cleveland city officials, IBEW President Gordon Freeman and Local 38 officers, Meany announced that Freeman had set a July 1 deadline for the local to comply with AFL-CIO's anti-bias policy.

The haste with which the national conference was scheduled and the Cleveland deadline set suggest that Carey's angry walk-out had stung in tender spots.

But one of Carey's other charges was even more significant. Under the organizational structure of the AFL-CIO, the Committee on Civil Rights is composed of top officials like Carey. In addition, there is a "Department," operated under the "general direction" of the President, which is composed of full-time staff personnel.

Complaints of bias in unions go first to the Department which has a specified time within which to investigate and, where necessary, seek an adjustment. After that the case is supposed to be passed up to the committee's three-man Subcommittee on Compliance for further action. From there it wends its way up to the Executive Council, the AFL-CIO's ruling body.

According to Carey, however, many complaints have remained bottled up in the Department. This, if true, is the most serious charge of all. For it is no secret that Local 38 is only one among scores or hundreds of locals, particularly in the building trades, which have stubbornly refused to apply in unions the principle of non-discrimination laid down for public schools by the Supreme Court.

Don't Be Prepared

WE HAVE so often depended on the Senate to put back into the budget what the House takes out that we are now in danger of assuming more Senatorial responsibility than may exist. An immediate test of the Senate's willingness to think beyond next week will be its action to restore $300,000 for the President's Committee on Education Beyond the High School. The House cut the whole amount out.

The House timing was perfect, for the axe fell just at the moment when thousands of nervous young applicants were awaiting the verdict of college admissions offices. And that verdict, in a great many cases, will be no: no room. How many of those who wish to begin their higher education this year *should* go to college is a question deserving serious debate. We do know that today only about one-half of the ablest 25 percent of our high school graduates go on with their studies, and that

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only six out of 10 of the top five percent of high school graduates receive a higher education.

Further, we are informed by the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare that "by 1970, the number of young persons seeking higher education will at least be doubled, perhaps tripled."

The purpose of the President's Committee was to take note of present inadequacies, to anticipate future demands on our colleges and universities and to recommend what might be done to meet the next decade's inevitable problems. The Committee was to have made its report some time next year. The action of the House, if sustained by the Senate, will require the Committee to wind up its work by the end of next month.

And as if to show that budgetary irresponsibility has no limits, the House, just before Easter recess, also: reduced by $25 million the amount originally requested for federal loans to colleges for the construction of new housing; and, approved an increase in the interest rate on these loans from the present 2.7 percent to 3.5 percent.

Kirk on Shaw

WHEN REALITY becomes overbearing, one can always turn for escape to the writings of Russell Kirk, editor of *The Conservative Review* and columnist for *The National Review.*

More successfully than any current historical novelist, in our opinion, Dr. Kirk captures the spirit of English life at the time of Jane Austen and makes us wish we had lived then. Occasionally, he convinces us we *are* living then. This accomplishment appears the more remarkable when we consider that Dr. Kirk writes contemporary political tracts, not novels, and that he lives in Mecosta, Michigan, not Steventon, Hampshire. For those unacquainted with Kirkian romanticism, here is a sample: "No social institution does more to develop decent leadership and a sense of responsibility than does the inheritance of large properties."

This is all by way of reporting that Devin-Adair has published another of Dr. Kirk's books: *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Conservatism.* In it, Dr. Kirk elects to debate with the late George Bernard Shaw about women. "With many other radicals," begins Dr. Kirk,

> Shaw believed that women, once enfranchised, would turn society inside out; they would be ferocious innovators. . . . But women have become the most determined conservatives in modern society.

They certainly have, as anyone knows who learned from Gallup polls how much the ladies like Ike. What was Shaw thinking of? Could he have been that wrong about women?

To find out, we turned to GBS's *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism,* and there, with relief, we read:

> Only the other day the admission of women to the electorate . . . was expected to raise politics to a nobler plane and purify public life. But at the election which followed, the women voted for hanging the Kaiser and rallied hysterically round the worst male candidates. . . . In short, the notion that the female voter is more politically intelligent . . . than the male voter proved as great a delusion as the earlier delusion that the businessman was any wiser politically than the country gentleman.

Point Four by Ford

SOVIET traveling salesmen to Asian nations have been offering more than industrial equipment: on-the-job training in Russian plants is made available as an extra dividend. Thus, the Soviet agreement with India to build the $231 million Bhilai steel mill provided not only easy terms for repayment of the loan—2.5 percent interest—but also apprenticeships for 686 Indian technicians who will study and work in Soviet factories.

Capitalist countries, imply the Russians, prefer to export their own technicians to underdeveloped areas, rather than permitting Asians to pick up practical know-how in Western plants.

Until last week, the Soviet inference was convincing. It has often been noted that in its economic diplomacy, as indeed in all its international activities, Moscow enjoys the built-in competitive advantage peculiar to totalitarian states: the government is not subject to parliamentary checks, and it can command industry to do what officialdom says must be done. If Moscow decides a new Indian steel mill is in the Russian interest and that 686 Soviet labor heroes in Soviet steel mills must be displaced by the same number of Indian technicians, who is to gainsay the government?

And if, as actually happened in India's case, the Indians wish to have American—not Russian—steel mills, eight years can go by while the Indian request drifts through bureaucratic channels in Washington and finally founders on the reluctance of private investors. In their second Five Year Plan, the Indians had to go ahead without the US, instead relying for their projected 5.6-million-ton steel output by 1961 on Soviet-built Bhilai and two additional British and German-financed mills.

Still, Western-oriented Indian leaders wanted to balance these 686 Soviet-trained technicians—91 are already in the USSR—with at least as many trained in the West. "Damn private enterprise," exclaimed one Indian, "damn your trade unions, isn't there some way this can be done?"

The answer has come from the Ford Foundation. Its

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devoted representative in India, Douglas Ensminger, worked patiently for two years to enlist the support of American industry and labor for an on-the-job training program in US steel mills. Last week the Foundation announced a $1.5 million grant to underwrite major expenses of 200 Indian technicians who will begin arriving in September to work in eight steel plants and to receive training in nearby technological schools such as Case and Carnegie Tech.

As fast as Secretary Dulles burns our bridges abroad, it seems, the Ford Foundation rebuilds them. Ford has by now put $16 million to constructive use in India. And, in another grant this month, Ford has given $500,000 to widen cultural exchanges between Gomulka Poland and the West. Meanwhile in Washington, the Polish trade delegation—here on Mr. Dulles' invitation—enters its 11th week of negotiating for about $75 million in governmental assistance.

A Report on Red China

SECRETARY DULLES has an open mind, about as open as a bank on Sunday. He *might* be willing (he hasn't committed himself, mind you) to try a "selective experiment" to test whether limited freedom of the press is in the national interest. Under this "experiment" the Secretary would allow American journalists to go to China and report what they find, but only *if* all the interested magazines, newspapers and news-gathering agencies in the US were to get together on *who* should go (*my* man, of course). And if all the publishers were able to agree on which reporters should be in the "pool," then, perhaps, Secretary Dulles might open his mind an inch wider and discuss whether the newsmen should make only one trip, or whether they should be allowed to come and go in the free fashion of US reporters.

This is progress. The State Department ban on newsmen to the Chinese mainland has been absolute, and one who defied the ban, William Worthy, has just had his request for a renewal of his passport denied.

In large part because of this near-total information blackout, *The New Republic* next week is devoting an entire, enlarged issue to a Special Report on Communist China. The editorial staff has worked for the past six months on this Report and has had the cooperation of many of the world's best-informed students of modern-day China. Among the contributors to this issue are scholars from four American universities specializing in China studies, authors of the most reliable accounts on what has been happening under the Mao regime, and British, French and Swiss journalists who have been able themselves to observe what is happening.

Additional copies of this Special Report are being printed, since it will interest not only laymen, but colleges and universities where courses are taught in US foreign policy, Chinese history or contemporary Asia.

It is 30 years ago this week that *The New Republic* editorially noted that it was "impossible to exaggerate either the importance of the Chinese revolution or its incalculability . . .

> It will alter the balance of power, not in Europe but in the world. It will directly affect from ten to twenty times the number of people who were, during its different phases, affected by the French revolution, and at least three times the number of people that are being affected by the Russian Revolution.

"The new China," concluded that editorial of May 4, 1927

> . . . has undertaken the stupendous task of equipping a people who have cherished for thousands of years an enlightened submission to privation with the outlook and the technology of an avid Western progressive society . . . The response to it will be written in generations or centuries of labor, of research, of experimentation, of self-examination and, we fear, of unimaginable suffering on the part of the Chinese people.

The New Republic's Answer to the China News Ban

"COMMUNIST CHINA—A SPECIAL REPORT"

Forty Pages—Ten Articles

- By European journalists who knew the old China and have seen the new . . . Richard Hughes of *The Economist*, Robert Guillain of *Le Monde*, Peter Schmid of *Die Weltwoche*
- By qualified scholars . . . John K. Fairbank and Alexander Eckstein of Harvard, K. C. Chao, Richard L. Walker of Yale, Robert C. North of Stanford
- By a psychiatrist, Dr. Robert J. Lifton, who spent 17 months in Hong Kong studying "Brainwashing"
- By Howard L. Boorman, the former US Foreign Service Officer who until recently directed the US Consulate's China listening post at Hong Kong

NEXT WEEK

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Maneuvering in the Middle East

WHAT WE have lately observed in the Middle East, from the proclamation of the Eisenhower doctrine to the internal struggle in Jordan, have had vivid repercussions in Moscow. In the beginning at least, the Eisenhower doctrine was taken extremely seriously. "International Life," the Soviet periodical devoted to the study of foreign affairs, dealt with this topic in countless articles, leaving the general impression that the Soviet Union faced a very clever and highly dangerous attempt by American imperialism to establish its political hegemony over the Middle East. This may strike the student of Middle Eastern affairs as somewhat peculiar, but it did not surprise those who follow Soviet attitudes to world affairs: However inept and blundering Western policy, the typical reaction of Leninism has always been to attribute to "Wall Street" qualities of political intelligence, of infernal shrewdness, of diabolical Machiavellian intrigue. It was simply unthinkable in Moscow that Washington should not have a clear line in the Middle East, that American policy was merely a chain of *ad hoc* reactions. In addition, Leninists always think in terms of class interests: A social class (and *a fortiori* "American Imperialists") always act in accordance with their economic and political interests.

But since American policy in the Middle East, and in particular *vis-à-vis* Colonel Nasser, has frequently not been in accord with American interests, the obvious explanation—namely that shortsightedness, not deep intrigue, was the main factor underlying American policy in the Middle East—was totally unacceptable in Moscow for some time.

Of late, however, Soviet views have been somewhat modified and a more realistic explanation has prevailed. *Sovetskoe Vostokovedenye*, the Soviet journal dedicated to the study of Asian and African affairs, has in its most recent issue (published with the usual delay of three months) come to realize "that this attack [on Egypt] came without the previous agreement of the United States." The Eisenhower doctrine is no longer taken so seriously. In fact, it is contemptuously dismissed ("It will land on the dung heap of history"). But while the original Russian fears of effective American intervention in the Middle East seem to have been dispelled, the Eisenhower doctrine still has its uses as a weapon in the Soviet anti-American propaganda campaign. In broadcasts to Arab countries it is described as a sinister attempt to enslave the free Arab peoples, to establish a new form of the hated colonialism. Even a new term has been coined: The Americans are the "neo-colonialists," in contrast to the British and French who are merely old-fashioned colonialists.

Whether the Russians believe a single word of this is more than doubtful, but there can be no doubt as to the propaganda's efficacy. An analysis of the Egyptian and Syrian press and radio shows that this line has been swallowed whole in Cairo and Damascus.

The news that Lebanon and Saudi Arabia have accepted the Eisenhower doctrine does not seem now to be unduly worrying Moscow, nor has the recent partial setback in Jordan been a matter of profound concern. For according to the Soviet view (and the validity of this assumption can hardly be doubted) Egypt and Syria are the countries which really matter, and in Cairo and Damascus the Soviet position appears unassailable.

It has to be admitted that this Soviet attitude is far closer to realities than views still prevalent in some Western circles. According to these circles the "positive neutralism" preached from Cairo and Damascus should be taken at its face value; the only passion moving these regimes is Arab nationalism (and nothing else); and a partition of Israel among the Arab states would solve the difficulties of the West in the Middle East. Unfortunately, all the factual evidence points to the contrary: The gradual Communist domination of the Egyptian and Syrian press and radio and successful Communist penetration of the army, the political police and other positions of command.

THERE has not been the slightest doubt in Moscow about the direction in which Egypt and Syria are moving. In a highly illuminating article late in 1956 in *Kommunist*, the official party fortnightly, the authors stated unequivocally that these countries were passing through a necessary interim stage on the way to Communism. Nationalist and religious elements still prominently inherent in these regimes should mislead nobody, for it is not the outward trappings which are decisive (they will soon prove to have been transient) but the iron logic of development which will take its course with, or without, the will of the present rulers. In other words: Soviet prestige and pressure, the steadily growing Communist influence in these countries, and above all the inability of the "nationalist" regimes to provide any solutions for their countries' pressing domestic problems would guarantee the smooth transit toward a specific Middle Eastern form of "Popular Democracy."

Russia's difficulties in the Middle East are now to be found on the tactical level. Soviet foreign policy in the Middle East has achieved its great successes during the last year or two owing to the decision to break away from the Stalinist dogma that close collaboration was impossible with the new nationalist governments in Asia. In-

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stead, a new thesis about the desirability of cooperation with the "national bourgeoisie" in Asia was put forward and applied with great astuteness. The switch, as is so frequently the case with Soviet tactics, was total. Up to 1955 the entire "national bourgeoisie" had been attacked; after 1955 it was accepted in its entity as an ally. In a long and detailed report two weeks ago from the two Pravda correspondents in Cairo on the Jordan situation, unnamed "reactionary" leaders in that country were sharply criticized for the ouster of the Nabulsi Government, but King Hussein was not even mentioned. In a similar way, King Saud was not blamed for having signed the new treaties with Washington. But this solicitude is not likely to continue. Within the past week, Moscow radio admitted to being "surprised, to say the least, at what King Hussein said about international Communism seeking to destroy Jordan."

There have been other warnings recently against the total Soviet acceptance of the "national bourgeoisie." At a conference in Moscow several months back sponsored by the Oriental Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences, speakers mentioned the existence of reactionary trends in this class, especially those "bourgeoisie" who are connected with the West ("compradors")—the monopoly capitalists and the big landowners. It seems unlikely that Moscow will indefinitely withhold criticism of those Arab rulers and governments who refuse to follow the lead of Cairo and Damascus. In future, we may expect the Soviet Union to differentiate more markedly between "progressive" and "reactionary" regimes in the Arab world.

How this will work out in detail remains to be seen. But there is always reason for the Russians to hope that King Hussein will not last long, that Nuri es-Said's regime will become more shaky, that Lebanon may be bullied into subservience. The Soviet Union can very well afford to wait patiently for a year or two, letting Jordan and Iraq, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia stew in their own juice until a new, and sharper crisis develops.

Through all this, the Soviet attitude to Israel has remained the same—nor does an improvement seem likely. Israel at present gets a worse press in Moscow than General Franco, Chiang Kai-shek, or Syngman Rhee; at the same time the situation of Soviet Jewry has again palpably deteriorated after the respite following Stalin's death. It has been realized in Moscow that all-out support for the Arab governments against Israel is the key to success in the Middle East; why should it give up a policy that has already paid handsome dividends and may pay more?

Some Israeli leaders have been reluctant to react to the Soviet threats for fear that the trickle of immigrants from Russia would cease (which it has, anyway, in recent weeks). Other Jewish organizations, such as the World Jewish Congress, have refrained from commenting on the situation of Soviet Jewry in order not to give offense and forfeit a possible invitation to Moscow (which has been eagerly expected for a long time). In view of this Jewish reluctance to play out the few trump cards that exist, an improvement in the Soviet attitude is highly unlikely, and a further deterioration cannot be ruled out. The weekly *Novoye Vremya* wrote the other day that the 1948 war had been an Israeli act of aggression against the neighboring Arab countries—an allegation that proved to be too much even for the Israeli Communist organ *Kol Ha'am*. And Dr. V. Lutski, Russia's main expert on Israel, has said in *Meshdunarodnaya Zhisn* that the aggressive designs of the Zionist gangs are the only reasons for unrest in the Middle East.

Only an agreement between West and East could now allay Middle Eastern tensions and remove the danger of a new war. But from the Soviet point of view, the Middle East is the area where such agreement is least desirable. The Soviets may compromise in Europe and elsewhere. But in the Middle East, it is different. There, they feel certain, time works for them.

WALTER Z. LAQUEUR

Stalin's Ghost Over Hammersmith

by HUGH MASSINGHAM

THE BRITISH Communists have just finished a special Congress that is full of fascination for the connoisseur. It will be said that the party is one of the weakest in the Western world, and certainly it numbers its warriors in thousands whereas the French and Italians can count theirs in millions. All the same there is a sense in which its pathetic feebleness makes it a truer guide to Communist theory and practice than a stronger organization. *Molto in parvo*. . . . Because it is so ineffectual the British Party has to be more obsequious and therefore expresses more faithfully the policy of its masters. We can learn a great deal from the proceedings of this Congress, called—and with the greatest reluctance—because the rank and file were getting out of hand after the tragic events in Hungary.

Let us begin by introducing some of the principal characters in the cast. Look over the line of paper hydrangeas, now becoming a little grubby and crinkled,

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and admire the mournful Saint Bernard features of Mr. J. R. Campbell, the editor of *The Daily Worker*. Note the ruby countenance of Mr. Harry Pollitt, who was thrown to the wolves a year ago after the Khrushchev revelation. His successor as General Secretary, the most powerful position in the party, is Mr. John Gollan, a lean and hungry Scot. And on his left is Mr. R. Palme Dutt, the high priest of the movement, the man personally chosen by Stalin to be the spiritual adviser of the party.

It is an important point since one of the reasons why the Western parties have been so unyielding and reactionary during the past two years is because they were literally Stalin's creations. He molded them into their present shape. He chose Togliatti in Italy and Thorez in France—and he appointed Palme Dutt, the intellectual, and Harry Pollitt, the solid working man, to preside over the British Communists. Stalin is dead, but his fearful genius still broods over the Communist world. Even the attitudes that are struck at certain times originally came from him. In the Thirties, for instance, he not only told his executioners what to say to their victims but even rehearsed them in the gestures they were to use. Listen to these frightening words from a witness who is in a position to know:

> When Stalin made preparations for the purges back in the days of Yagoda, he personally instructed him in how to deal with members of the Communist Old Guard if they were reluctant to confess. One had to look them meaningly in the eye and say, "You would have sacrificed your life for the party many a time, wouldn't you?" When the other man nods, you raise your hand and hit the desk with the back of it: "Well, sacrifice it now!"

That lesson was repeated by Yagoda to all the heads of the security forces in the satellites, so that in Prague, in Budapest, in Belgrade, in East Berlin exactly the same words and movements were repeated at every new frame-up.

Now observe the British Stalinists when they were faced by the Russian intervention in Hungary. Apparently the Executive Committee met early one morning and sat until the evening: something had to be thrashed out by 5:30 in order to catch the first edition of *The Daily Worker*. The time spent in this secret session shows the bewilderment of the leadership, the desperate nature of the crisis. One or two other facts about these deliberations emerged during the meeting of the special Congress.

Although heavily outnumbered by the Stalinists at least one member of the Executive, a Mr. Brian Behan, fought for a more liberal attitude. At the end of the debate he was assured by Mr. Gollan that his resolution would appear in *The Daily Worker* the next day. Needless to say it was not printed. Nor is this all. When the Platform put forward its nominees for the new Executive, Mr. Behan was not on the list. Only the most obedient had been picked. Every critic had been rejected, so that whatever Mr. Gollan now says, even if he gets up and recites the multiplication table, he will be received with ecstatic cries of "Hallelujah!" For of such, in Stalinist circles, is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Having taken its stand, having agreed that the Hungarian revolution was a Fascist plot organized by the Americans, the leadership was still faced by a rebellion that had at all costs to be crushed. There was never any question of making important concessions to the "revisionists," as they are blisteringly referred to in high circles. The more faint-hearted among the critics were to be bullied into submission; the bolder spirits were to be expelled, and the gullible were to be soothed by a spurious display of sweetness and light.

The first move was to set up a special Commission to report on the question of "Inner-Party Democracy." The Stalinists, however, took good care that the inquiry should not come to any awkward conclusions. Ten of the 15 members were party functionaries—paid officials who could be relied upon to obey orders. Thus the result of the investigation was a foregone conclusion. The faithful majority reported that there was nothing very much wrong with the way the party was being governed. The rank and file, it was piously suggested, should take more interest in the policy discussions, but in the main there were to be no serious reforms. The sacred principles of "democratic centralism" were to remain intact.

With the publication of this report it was clear that all hope of a more democratic or a more British party was gone. But for once the opposition was so thoroughly roused that it could not be dragooned into silence, though the leadership made every attempt to do so—threats to some and appeals to others for loyalty "in the face of the class enemy." A minority on the "Inner-Party Democracy" Commission insisted on bringing out their own report, and this was considered so embarrassing that the Stalinists decided it should not be presented to the special Congress as an official document. Then there were the strong-arm methods used in the branches. It being imperative to pack the special Congress with faithful stooges, any yes-man who was having difficulty in getting elected as a delegate was immediately switched to a different locality.

But although the bureaucrats by now were obviously getting the upper hand, their methods only increased the disillusionment that was spreading through the Movement. During the last 12 months the party has lost a fifth of its membership and the sales of *The Daily Worker* have slumped so badly that there is talk of turn-

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ing it into a weekly periodical. It was impossible to conceal either the size or the anger of the opposition. Day after day protests appeared in the party press, and the Stalinists soon discovered that if they rejected a letter, the authors of it were quite capable of sending it elsewhere.

So on Good Friday, while Christians were putting on their mourning in memory of the most tragic date in their religious Calendar, the Communist faithful gathered at Hammersmith, in London, for the special Congress. Ninety percent of them were hand picked and turned up, determined to vote with both feet if that should prove necessary to save their Stalinist leaders. The bureaucrats had taken other precautions. At a Communist Congress what goes on in public is less significant than the proceedings of the Committees that meet in secret and behind the scenes. These bodies decide all the real business—who shall be called during the debates, for instance, and what resolutions shall be moved. Knowing this, the bureaucrats had arranged that all the important committees should be presided over by an experienced functionary.

Even so it was impossible to disguise the widespread discontent within the party. There were 2,246 amendments to the official resolutions, and although most of them were innocuous, there were others that were highly critical. Many of the motions sent in by the branches were equally frank. What is more, about 10 percent of the delegates were determined to speak up and attack the leadership.

"Free Harich Sack Harry"—these were the words painted by some ingenious wag on the roadway outside the hall. Harich, of course, is the young intellectual recently arrested by the East Germans and Harry is Harry Pollitt, the man who, up to a year ago, has ruled the Movement. The slogan, indeed, perfectly expressed the general view of the critics. Despite their differences—and this is their obvious weakness—there was at least one point on which they could all be agreed. The old Stalinist gang should be sacked to a man. "Now, now," one delegate said, pointing at all those practiced fixers on the platform. "Don't get up to your old tricks." It was a particularly serious attack because the speaker happened, in Communist terms, to be beyond reproach: he had not only caused a strike in his firm but had afterward been sacked because of it. Later on he was to be even more brutal. "I want to come to the next Congress," he said, "and see at least a partially new front bench—not the Dutt-Pollitt-What's-his-name axis." One could hardly believe one's ears. In the past no delegate would ever have been allowed to express such heresy.

Even more damaging was a speech made by Professor Hyman Levy, a man who has spent his whole life in the Movement and is probably more respected than any other intellectual. Small, grey-haired, groping over his notes, he roused the conference as no other delegate had succeeded in doing. Boos and cheers punctuated his remarks.

Despite protests from the hall, Levy described the Russian system as "a cast iron bureaucracy; a terror; a form of gangsterism. . . . I recently went," he continued, "to the Soviet Union. I saw things that shook me to my very foundations. I got my bellyful. Enough to last me for the rest of my life." Then came the real sting of his attack, for he accused the leaders of knowing all this and hiding it from the rank and file. "How often has Harry Pollitt," he asked, "been told about this and told people to keep their mouths shut? Is it not the truth that the leadership knew and kept it from you? Could not trust you or the working classes to take it?" Words like these have never been spoken before in a Communist conence.

The Stalinists have, of course, won every round, but things have by now gone too far to be settled by paper victories at Hammersmith. One of two things would seem to be inevitable. Many of the revisionists stayed on in the party after the Hungarian tragedy in the hope that this special Congress would lead to a fundamental change in the leadership of the party. Angry though they are, there is a possibility that they will not resign but will remain within the Movement and continue their agitation for reform. Those who are of this opinion believe that their prospects are not so slender as most of us think. There will be other crises, they argue, and the leadership will blunder from one mistake to the next until the point comes when the rank and file will unite and demand a change.

The alternative is that the revisionists—and there are supposed to be still about 4,000 of them in the party—will leave in disgust. The Movement would then shrink to a hard core of obedient followers, turning smartly at every word of command, beyond doubt or self-criticism—the Plymouth Brethren of politics, meeting every now and then to enjoy their strange and secret rites, encouraging one another with familiar words, and chanting, with closed eyes, the more sanguinary passages of the Marxist psalms. One gets the impression that the leaders would not be at all sorry if this were to happen. More and more cut off from English life, absorbed in an endless round of intrigue and double talk, they would rather have a small and subservient party than a larger one that might be more difficult to control. What they surely forget is that, if the present drift continues, they will not have much value to their masters. There is always the possibility that the Kremlin, bored by their pretentions and impatient with their incapacity, may one day sell them down the river.

London

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Diseases of Scholarship

(Clinically Considered by a Non-Scholar)

by ROBERT GRAVES

I HAVE the greatest respect for scholars; but I am not a scholar myself—I lack the qualifications. The only University degree I ever attained was a B.Litt. at Oxford, in 1925; and that, I am ashamed to say, came to me by arrangement with a friend, the Regius Professor of English Literature, who liked my poems. (I had lived outside the University area, attended very few lectures, and sat for no examinations.) Being thus securely barred from the closed society of scholars, I can discuss the diseases of scholarship without needing to feel my own pulse, sound my own heart, or examine my own tongue in the bathroom mirror.

The first thing to note about scholars is where they live. Since the days of the Ptolemies, when the concept of scholarship began to harden at Alexandria, most scholars have been city dwellers; in close social contact with one another; attached to a library under State patronage; of high civic standing; and excused from all manual labor. The sole general exceptions to this rule seem to have been the Jewish scholars of Jamnian and later days, who had no State to encourage their labors, and who worked at a handicraft or trade: to avoid the stigma of studying the Law for personal gain rather than *lehishma*—for the love of God. The Law had laid it down: "Six days shalt thou labor!" and study did not count as labor.

In ancient Britain and Ireland, scholars—if one may call Druids and magicians "scholars"—lived in forests, not towns; but they chose to do so because all training was oral, and the forest offered fewer distractions and greater concealment. Nowadays, the urban university is the inevitable center of scholarship; since only at a university does one find the required libraries, learned reviews, technical apparatus and scholarly colleagues. A would-be scholar, unless rich enough to own a first-class reference library—and how many scholars are?—must either move to a university town; or study elsewhere some abstruse subject about which no trustworthy literature exists; or be content with amateur status. Yet nearly all the diseases of scholarship derive from the university system.

The most crippling of these diseases, and perhaps the commonest has been diagnosed by abler people than myself: *creeping pedagogitis*. Universities are, traditionally, teaching centers rather than research centers. The scholar's main interest should be accurate research; yet his social excuse for existence (not to mention his means of livelihood) is teaching. Scholastic eminence may be rewarded with a doctorate, and what are doctorates but teaching diplomas? Now, teaching may seem a good way of expanding one's knowledge, but in practice it mars more scholars than it makes. Eventually, as a reward for training class after class to jump through the same fairly low examination hoop—a scholar may get a Chair and find his teaching limited to three or four lectures a term. Yet when he takes his seat at last the damage has usually been done. Comparatively few undergraduates have scholarly instincts; nine out of ten are taking the course because a university degree will help them in their unscholarly careers; and it seldom happens that an undergraduate raises an interesting new problem in the course of discussion.

The pedagogic life, complicated by administrative and social duties, makes such demands on a scholar's temper, time and vital forces that except in rare cases he must decide whether to help his pupils pass their examinations, or whether to neglect them for original research on a scholarly level. Frequently he compromises, becoming not too bad a teacher, though not too good a scholar. This dilemma has been officially recognized, and explains the sabbatical year accorded lecturers by some universities. Yet scholarship is an unrelenting task that cannot be attended to only on Sunday mornings and during sabbatical years; and if the scholar must have a secondary occupation to justify his existence, teaching is by far the worst. It would be infinitely better if he were to follow the example of the Jamnian rabbis of old, and turn cobbler, nail-maker, or sexton; or if, like a friend of mine—a pure mathematician who is afraid of going batty from having to deal with multi-dimensional abstractions—he were to break off now and then for a spell of good, clean three-dimensional garage-work.

Then there is the feeling of superiority that lecturing

ROBERT GRAVES, *distinguished as a poet, a novelist, a classicist and an anthropologist, has recently concluded a tour of the US. This essay, which will be concluded in a later issue, is the first of several drawn from his American addresses.*

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from a dais to a crowd of young students excites, and the need to discipline them by trading on this superiority. I noticed its ill-effects on myself long ago, while I was instructing Army cadets in a wartime Oxford College: I found myself putting on a turn every time I faced them.

Under the present university system, *creeping pedagogitis* seems unavoidable, except by the sternest and most resolute souls. But the United States has set an admirable example to the rest of the world by endowing research foundations for scholars. If such foundations were loosely integrated with all major universities, it might be possible to check the disease: by drawing a clear and not invidious distinction between the true scholar and the educationalist. The educationalist would then rank as an honored and responsible State official, trained to teach students the facts and theories generally approved by the State and required for public examination. I see him as a man of enthusiasm, character, humility, humor, gifted with the art of exposition, a genuine love of teaching, but little intellectual curiosity or ambition. In an ideal society, when the educationalist has brought his pupils up to point X, and shepherded them through their examinations, they can be released for business, or the law, or government administration, or whatever—including educationalism—round pegs fitting into round holes. He will, of course, have found a good many pupils resistant to his teaching: most of them either athletic, stupid or mentally sick; but also a few natural scholars. He will hand these ugly ducklings over to their kind, the elder scholars, for turning into swans; and they will presently be introduced, with all security precautions, to certain post-graduate secrets—the factual, uncomfortable, background truth of things—of which educationalists know nothing, and of which the State can take no official cognizance, for fear of revolution or breaches of the peace. True scholarship might thus become self-perpetuating.

A NEW problem will then arise: "How much scholarly truth can safely be passed on to educationalists for the purpose of maintaining the nation's cultural prestige?" High-level political committees might have to decide on that, as a conclave of Cardinals advises His Holiness the Pope on the Church's attitude to modern cultural developments.

So we come to another disease of scholarship: *political siopesis,* or the tacit condonation of untruth. Let me make myself quite clear. There are certain historical facts which it is obviously inconvenient to publicize, because too many vested interests would be threatened by their disclosure. Educationalists have recently, for instance, conspired to publish a pre-destined best-seller entitled *The Bible As History,* and subtitled: *A Confirmation of the Book of Books—"Never before has this almost incalculable fund of scientifically attested material been made available to the general public!"* The book, hatched out in Germany, but designed mainly for the American market, does contain many interesting sidelights on Biblical history: for example, a photograph of the manna mentioned in *Exodus*—a sweet white blight which infects the Sinai tamarisk-tree. Yet the editors shrink from explaining how 600,000 men and women, besides children, could have subsisted for a week on manna, eating an *omer* each every day—which adds up to some 42 million pounds' weight of tamarisk blight, the product of perhaps 100 million badly infected trees. Almost I should prefer to believe that the manna had fallen from a space-ship on one of those earlier Martian raids against Earth. And if you turn to the pages where some of the weaker spots in Biblical history should be exposed, these are always carefully shrouded.

Thus, you will find no legal comment on the unhistorical nature of Jesus' Trial, as recorded in the Gospels, where anti-Pharisaic Pauline editors have wrongly placed the blame for his condemnation not on the Romans, and their protegé Herod Antipas, and their advisory court of 15 priestly collaborators; but on the non-collaborationist Sanhedrin, the predominantly Pharisee Supreme Court of 71 members—who could not possibly have been convened on the day, or at the hour, stated; nor have admitted the alleged evidence; nor have passed the sentence accredited to them.

VERY well. I can understand that it is politic, in a predominantly Christian country, to buttress fundamentalist faith against the attacks of atheistical Communists, and to guard Sunday School innocents from offense. . . . I can understand, in the same way, that it is politic to make the origins of the War of Independence read as heroically as possible to young American citizens. Every historian who has consulted the original documents must know the facts of the Boston Tea Party as well as I do. In 1774, the world price of tea fell heavily and, with British Government consent, the East India Company presently dumped several shiploads on the American Colonies at a low price. The Massachusetts smugglers, controlled by "King Hancock," who had profitably handled (it is said) 5,000 chests of Dutch tea in the previous two years, could not compete with the new price asked, even though this included the threepence a pound duty. With large stocks still in their warehouses, they saw themselves ruined. So they persuaded a revolutionary organization called "the Sons of Liberty," led by Samuel Adams, to collect a gang disguised as Indians—though the Indians, who were tea-addicts, would have whooped with delight at the fall in price—and dump the tea into Boston Harbor, as a protest against the iniquitous duty of threepence a pound. (Samuel Adams' skillful tactics of lies and incitement have recently, I see, been approved by a group of American Communists, the Boston Samuel Adams School.)

This is hardly the story as told by educationalists; indeed the entire history of the American War of Inde-

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pendence is mistold in all school text-books—including (I venture to say) the standard *Rise of American Civilization* by Charles and Mary Beard. The patriotic scholar is obliged to keep silent (though perhaps troubled in his conscience) and his patriotic silence seems to give assent. British accounts of the American War of Independence are, of course, equally disingenuous, for other reasons. *Political siopesis* could readily be cured by the treatment that I have already suggested for *pedagogitis:* separate the scholars from the educationalists, and do not require them to decide just how much truth it is politically prudent to disclose—for example, about the proportion of American volunteers in George Washington's command, to British and Hessian deserters, and French auxiliaries; or, on the other hand, how a battalion of British Guards were routed at Guildford Court House by the First Maryland Regiment, and had to be shelled by British artillery before they would turn and fight again.

ANOTHER disease is *academic xenophobia:* a studied coldness to all outsiders who can show no letters after their name, nor honorific titles before. It is true that enthusiastic amateurs, who have had only a sketchy grounding in a learned science, often waste the time of serious scholars by thrusting their views on them. It is true, too, that if a university, or foundation, is called upon to make a scholastic appointment, the adjudicators cannot in self-protection consider the names of outsiders. Yet it may sometimes happen, in the abstruser fields of knowledge—such as primitive dialects, or various departments of zoology, botany, and anthropology—that the most suitable candidate has not even been to college. Again, the non-scholar with a hunch—like Schliemann in 19th Century archaeology—sometimes puts the leading scholars to shame. And though I admit to sympathy with 20th Century archaeologists who curse Schliemann for his monstrously unscientific digging methods, which ruined large parts of the Troy site, I cannot deny that *academic xenophobia* has ugly symptoms. In fact, I come up against this disease time and again in the course of my own work.

Let me quote a single anecdotal instance. An anonymous English divine was sent a thousand-page book, *The Nazarene Gospel Restored,* for review by a leading London newspaper. Unable to find any gross historical flaws in the argument, he decided to ridicule its authors —Joshua Podro, a learned Talmudist, and myself, a student of early Church history—as ignorant outsiders, and trounce us on a few small points of scholarship. We defended our views soberly in the correspondence columns. He replied with a repudiation of the meaning we had given a Hebrew word (a meaning quoted from the most authoritative of all modern Hebrew dictionaries) on the ground that this dictionary had not yet been translated into English or German by competent non-Jewish scholars. He also charged us with unethically camouflaging the true text of *Galatians* iv. 14—a trick which, he said, exposed the rottenness of our whole argument. We replied once more, to clear our good name; but the assistant editor informed us that the correspondence had been closed by order of the editor—now away on holiday—and could not be re-opened. We reminded him that the editor as such never went on holiday, and demanded a formal retraction of the damaging statement.

This particular divine, having taken his stand on a common reading of *Galatians* iv. 14, which exculpates Paul of any moral blame, persuaded the editor to be firm and make no retraction. Pacific means failing, Joshua Podro and I issued a writ for libel. The newspaper's lawyers took several months to prepare their defense for the High Court hearing; but finally put one in. This stated that the reading favored by their client was regarded by all scholars as the oldest and most authoritative; and that it occurred in every uncial and cursive Western manuscript of *Galatians,* and in every Bohairic Coptic one. Also, that the reading we favored was rejected by all scholars, as being late and unsound; and that its adoption by the Byzantine Church, like its occurrence in the familiar "Received Text," had no scholarly significance.

In the end we withdrew our writ and let the editor off with a published retraction, which he was glad to make; and with legal costs, which he was glad to pay. I should explain that I had consulted my father-in-law (an ex-President of the Law Society of Great Britain), and my brother-in-law (a Queen's Counsellor). Both warned us that if the case went before a jury, as opposed to a judge (and the newspaper's lawyers were entitled to demand trial by jury), we might easily lose: because we were non-scholars, and because St. Paul's reputation, and the Church's, seemed to be at stake. Yet, as we knew (and as our opponents also knew by now) the Bohairic Coptic texts, which contained their variant reading, were a century later than the Sahidic Coptic texts, which contained ours. Moreover, the anonymous divine had also, it appears, been working from an out-of-date New Testament. For, in 1936, the Chester Beatty Papyrus of *Galatians* was published; it is the grandfather of all the cursives, and the father of all the uncials—a clear hundred years older than the eldest; and contains our reading, which has since been incorporated in all up-to-date Greek Testaments.

WHAT would be effective treatment for *academic xenophobia*? It is a problem. One cannot always be issuing writs. All I know is that once, when two or three Welsh University scholars whom I approached for enlightenment on a point of medieval history rebuffed me with studied rudeness, I felt that they deserved to be shanghaied for a year's voyage in a really tough whaling ship, and forced to learn what the Greek word *xenos* means.

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BOOKS & COMMENT

A Saint of the Comic

by Victor Lange

WHEN some of these sketches appeared in *The New Yorker*, it was clear that an extraordinarily memorable figure had been created, an individual so appealing and telling and plausible that he would not easily be forgotten. And now that we see Pnin even more distinctly, his idiosyncracies and above all the charm and the melancholy of his life still more touchingly illuminated, we recognize in him, as in Oblomov or Gregor Samsa, the superb fictional embodiment of a particular, yet universal human situation. Pnin, the

Pnin, by Vladimir Nabokov (Doubleday; $3.50).

assistant professor of Russian at Waindell College, on his way (and in the wrong train) to address the Cremona Women's Club; Pnin, an odd member of the Waindell faculty, immensely and wonderfully burdened with the memories of his Russian childhood and his years of exile in France and now America, the lonely and the sociable, the myopic and the clearsighted, the victor and the victim—all these we knew, or thought we knew.

What we now learn from the expanded book adds a new dimension to our understanding of Timofey Pnin: we can now piece together the story of his pathetic marriage, we meet his wife's son at St. Bart's and on a brief and taciturn visit to Waindellville. We see Pnin in the company of his fellow emigrés, and we hear above all, more distinctly than before, the voice of Pnin's biographer himself, who arrives at Waindell to take on a professorship just as his old acquaintance and now, ironically, his predecessor, is about to leave the town. Pnin's little sedan

> . . . free at last, spurted up the shining road, which one could make out narrowing to a thread of gold in the soft mist where hill after hill made beauty of distance, and where there was simply no saying what miracle might happen.

Pnin's career is altogether a chain of miraculous events and his ways of justifying himself are nothing short of saintly. For this eccentric refugee is most of all a man of unyielding faith in the integrity of heart and deed and speech. His life, suspended between poignant memory and frustration, between the sudden vision of clarity and the shock of defeat, can never come to terms with the stubborn realities of malevolent objects and of disappointing fellow creatures. Yet, his English, superimposed upon and abstracted from his own deeply experienced Russian, and awkward and incorrect, assumes an astonishing poetic force; and the immediacy of his relationship to the treacherous or exhilarating but never indifferent world of things sets in significant relief the dullness and monotony of the surroundings in which he performs. The disjointed and platitudinous routine of the society and the institutions in which he must maneuver is made grotesque and pathetic by the steady flow of Pnin's recollections and the continuity of his own judgments.

IN the saint's life, the discrepancy between faith and reality takes on a solemn and heroic aspect. But Pnin is a saint of the comic, the quixotic, that is to say, of the modern persuasion. By the absurdities of his life, by his laughable preoccupation with the patently irrelevant, he persuades us to readjust our focus and to revise our own sight.

This theme of an eccentric life is, in our day, common enough, but I doubt whether it has been elaborated with equal brilliance and, more important by far, with equal humanity. For Pnin is not an "outsider," his perspicacity is not due to those prerogatives of psychological aberration or disease or violence which lend to so much contemporary fiction a fashionable plausibility. He is not a mind hopelessly apart from all community but, rather, a mind who has wandered away, who has been driven from the native grounds of his experience into a baffling world where, by habit and resolution, he must assert his heritage no matter at what cost to himself and at the inevitable risk of exposing the obtuseness of those among whom—as something like a poltergeist—he is for a while allowed to exist.

IT is of course not as a piece of social criticism that *Pnin* should be read, although there are few observers of American life so clearsighted and brilliant and understanding as Nabokov. But his relentless eye upon the precise topical incident identifies rather than deprecates the social setting against which Pnin becomes alive. Nabokov's sense of detail, this is to say, is never naturalistic but effectively poetic: it involves a subtle, vigorous and often ingenious grasp of cultural alternatives. The rooms Pnin inhabits have, we are told, one general characteristic in common:

> In their parlor or stair-landing bookcases Hendrik Willem van Loon and Dr. Cronin were inevitably present: they might be separated by a flock of magazines, or by some glazed and buxom historical romance, or even by Mrs. Garnett impersonating somebody (and in such houses there would be sure to hang somewhere a Toulouse-Lautrec poster), but you found the pair without fail, exchanging looks of tender recognition, like two old friends at a crowded party.

Pnin himself, the Russian emigré, is by no means at a loss in this curiously fascinating — American — world of things; he lives, not as an absent-minded professor apart from it, not as its resigned victim:

> . . . on the contrary, he was perhaps too wary, too persistently on the lookout for diabolical pitfalls, too painfully on the alert lest his erratic surroundings (unpredictable America) inveigle him into some bit of preposterous oversight. It was the world that was absent-minded and it was Pnin whose business it was to set it straight. His life was a constant war with insensate objects that fell apart, or attacked him, or refused to function, or viciously got themselves lost as soon as they entered his sphere of existence.

This passage establishes not merely

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the energy and vigilance of Pnin's character, but reflects upon his view of the relationship between actuality and imagination. He is invited, at one point, to look at a cartoon in a magazine. "I do not want, John," he replies—he mispronounces Joan's name—"You know I do not understand what is advertisement and what is not advertisement."

WHETHER he watches the fascinating tumble of clothes in the washing machine or reads the latest issue of the Russian language daily published in Chicago, whether we see him happily settled in the wrong train or eagerly preparing what turns out to be his final party at Waindell, Pnin emerges as a figure of uncompromising alertness *vis-à-vis* the objective world. But his alertness is not merely, indeed not even primarily, intellectual. America, his adopted country, is seen without irritation, his lost Russia without sentimentality—the one world illuminates the other. He lives at Waindell,

> . . . a somewhat provincial institution characterized by an artificial lake in the middle of a landscaped campus, by ivied galleries connecting the various halls, by murals displaying recognizable members of the faculty in the act of passing on the torch of knowledge from Aristotle, Shakespeare, and Pasteur to a lot of monstrously built farm boys and farm girls.

The American world, however hospitable, is not easily digested; one of the first adjustments which he must make in this hygienic country is the pulling of all his teeth and the fitting of a shiny new bite. It is his memories that give him courage. Again and again he is enveloped by the recollection of moments of his earlier life, memories that seem like epiphanies, to lend reality and poignancy to his present. And it is, always, the undying pulse of his native language that remains the best guarantee, the true test of his vitality of heart.

Pnin's own personal substance, his objective presence itself, lends credibility enough to the world of which he is such a curious member. But the ressonance of this world is immeasurably extended and enhanced by the discrete yet delicious strategy by which Mr. Nabokov, through a gradually more implicated narrator, reports on Pnin.

Mr. Nabokov's craftsmanship is admirable; he shows us each element of his invented world in a succession of ironic variations: with his astonishing resources of language and his quicksilvery perception of associations, he keeps us endlessly delighted, and forever compels us to test the palpably firm surface of his tale for its infinite crevices of meaning. The plainest, most "single-minded" object is given a sudden and unforgettable animation: Mr. Nabokov, we remind ourselves, after all, translated *Alice in Wonderland* into Russian.

Like the world he inhabits, Pnin cannot be grasped in a single image. To his fellow citizens of Waindellville he may appear to be plainly absurd; to us and to the narrator—and indeed to himself—he is a figure of almost inexhaustible paradox. If he sees himself mimicked, he does not and cannot and, perhaps, must not recognize the truth:

> "In two-three years," said Pnin, missing one bus but boarding the next, "I will also be taken for an American."

Pnin's vita, though its essence is saintliness, is yet a work of brilliant magic and fabulous laughter. That ill-fated journey to Cremona where Pnin was to address the Women's Club and during which he is so sadly worried about his manuscript is an earnest of his life to come. We do not learn until the end of the book that on that occasion Pnin, not listening to the introduction by Miss Clyde, "an ageless blonde in aqua rayon, with large, flat cheeks stained a beautiful candy pink and two bright eyes basking in blue lunacy behind a rimless pince-nez," and rising to address the ladies, discovered that he had brought the wrong lecture.

Spring Raking

EARLY in April comes spring raking time.
The yard is frowzy after winter's sloth,
And I comb the lawn's dishevelment. Brown wisps
And curls roll up beneath the tines like frizzy,
Discarded ringlets. Here is the dross of leaves
I somehow missed last autumn, shed like scales,
And here in winter's trash are cheap mementoes,
Now meaningless—bits of foil and paper,
A rusty wire, a raveling mitten, all
To be swept away in this harsh beautification.
The clouds are shredded in April's violent sky;
I wield the rake in sudden, mysterious anger.
On the black earth, near the wall, a scarlet mite
Runs wildly to escape the raking teeth.
Rebellion flames in his hot splendid color,
Passion before the passionate season. "Yes,
Loud mite," I say; my hands let loose the rake
Which flies to earth and lies there tautly singing.
I take two steps, but stop, grown swiftly sad,
For my own rebellion sinks against the odds.
What is my tyrant but this moving season,
My passion but the winter dead and done,
Leaving these remnants I must clear away
Like my own shabby days? Red rebel, your
Cause is the world's and leads you summerward
To your right pleasure. But mine opposes you,
Can see no worth in beauty bought so dear,
And would lead back to ugly winter, back
To some stopped season. I instead am stopped,
Immobile at this point of ventless grief
Round which the revolution surges. I
Pick up the rake and move again to keep
My place in rank. The devil take spring raking.

HAYDEN CARRUTH

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Muller and the Tragic Spirit

by Jay Leyda

IN *The Uses of the Past,* Herbert Muller built such a sprawling monument to the new historical skepticism that the rest of his thinking career seems committed to refining and illuminating that work's various uncomfortable corners. Mr. Muller got much out of his system, and into ours, with that passionate, generous, opinionated, belligerent book. His new book is a more carefully shaped treatment of one of that book's multitude of themes.

The Spirit of Tragedy, by Herbert J. Muller (Knopf; $5).

The Uses of the Past, Profiles of Former Societies, is, as it should be, a book bigger than its title; *The Spirit of Tragedy* is, somehow, too large and un-Mullerian a title for his new book, which is, I hasten to say, large enough a book to confound us. For this is no jolly, soul-patting book to demonstrate that we need the experience of tragedy in art to show us "the true brightness of our life," to quote a radio commentator. No, this is the testament of a thoughtful agnostic (*could* there be an unthinking agnostic?) who might have adopted for his book's motto the Yeats aphorism: "We begin to live when we have conceived life as tragedy."

To increase the pressure of his idea Mr. Muller has narrowed his field to *staged* tragedy. Though never subjected to his analysis, the tragic novel or the tragic lyric—even the tragic painting—comes often to mind by implication. A further limitation is dictated by his observation that tragedy as an art has been produced only by Western civilization, yet he is careful to warn us that "the tragic sense is not the only mature, profound, or dignified sense of life"—and the defenders of Eastern art and thought are compelled to put away their irritation and read on.

One curious finding in Mr. Muller's examination of the history and attitudes of staged tragedy is that there has been no true tragedy since 400 B.C. But he is as stimulating in his analysis of those periods that lacked tragedy as he is in those where it flourished. As might be expected of the author of *The Uses of the Past*, there is a constant measuring, by past problems of art, of present problems—rarely to the credit of the present. He is conscious of the dangers of this, too, for he says, "if we suffer enough from the deficiencies of our own culture, we suffer still more from contrast with a glorified, mythical past." He then undertakes to make that past less mythical.

A flaw, but one I suppose unavoidable in any work that touches Greek literature: the book looks too much and too often, and always primarily, at the Greek critics and analysts of tragedy—at Plato and Aristotle—and I was impatient to hear more of Muller on the actual work of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides. But when he finally gets to them and their plays, Muller pictures these Greeks as human artists faced by certain conditions, both social and psychological. He is so equally concerned with authors and audience of tragedy as, sometimes, not to look at them separately; he pulls centuries, the essentials of centuries, together.

When he reaches the Elizabethans, Muller resists the temptation to bring new light to Shakespeare, and claims to concentrate "on his tragic vision of life, and its relation to Western history"—but in so modestly doing he casts plenty of light new to me. Yet only here, in worrying why there is so little to be learned about Shakespeare's own philosophy, does Muller speak in a voice alien to actual theatrical practice. Explanation of a theatre-man's triumph as "the most noncommittal and elusive of the world's great poets" may lie just in the fact that Shakespeare's "action springs more directly from character" than in Greek drama. Shakespeare does not address his audience directly. The words said by his characters are as much theirs as his, making their personalities appear to be independent of a philosopher-puppeteer's strings.

ONE disadvantage (not for the reader) of a stimulating book is that it's bound to provoke question and objection. I wonder why, for example, Muller makes a distinction between tragedy as "edifying," which he finds ruinous to the understanding of literature, and tragedy as "a comment on life," a definition posted large and forward on his book. Such a distinction, as undeveloped here, seems too tenuous to fight about. A better fight is Muller's war against "the popular simplicities." That tug of warring ironies continues from *The Uses of the Past* in the unpopular simplicities of *The Spirit of Tragedy*, where the attack is better organized, and the skirmish against the Great Books Program deserves a medal. The running duel with Francis Fergusson is one of the more entertaining clashes, and Muller actually draws blood from Toynbee.

It is only in his Elizabethan chapters that Muller places an optimistically familiar reliance on the fortuitous, an apparent inconsistency with the skeptical tenor of the book: he doubts that Marlowe's death "cost us dramatic masterpieces"; when the Puritans closed down the theatres, it was no loss, for "drama had been dying of itself." I hope he is not losing his love of contradiction and intellectual disturbance. The book as a whole is sufficiently unpopular (in intent) to quiet our anxieties about Muller's melting. All the good disturbing qualities of *The Uses of the Past* are honed to a more cutting blade here.

APPROACHING today, Muller points less excitingly to triumph of the tragic spirit. He brushes off, with apology, the only US candidates for places in the tragic hierarchy—O'Neill, Miller, Williams. For our sake I hope Muller is wrong here. And I hope that his other conclusions will not sour as soon as his summing up of O'Neill's reputation; two weeks after the publication of Muller's book that reputation had to be revised by the critics who saw *Long Day's Journey into Night*—a play to alter the O'Neill analysis in any new edition of Muller's book.

Mr. Muller's book may produce no new American tragedies, but each of his readers will be a keener witness of all tragedies—even Racine. I've had the rewarding experience, between reading this book and re-reading it, of seeing—on amateur and professional stages and on television—five works that Mr. Muller gives maximum attention to (no, no Racine), with the result of hearing more in them, not more detail, but more of their totality, in significance and

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effect. If a writer enriches my experience of witnessing dramas by Aeschylus, Sophocles, Shakespeare, Wagner and Chekhov, that is enough to justify a book's existence for me. In coming to the end of Mr. Muller's book, I find that he has not made life easier to live, nor simpler—for he understands it as a complex thing not to be prettied. He has indeed made it tougher—with the help of several other tough minds—and in that is the value of his book. *The Uses of the Past* is an enormous and varied punishment of complacency. In pursuit of that same end *The Spirit of Tragedy* will have a harder time finding the audience it deserves, yet I believe it to be a more lasting work.

Where the Voices Rattle On

by Honor Tracy

IN the days when novels were written by fuddy-duddies like Dickens, Hardy or Henry James, it often took the reader some little time to know if they were going to interest him or not. The scene had to be laid and the characters properly introduced, and only then would the author begin, still in a leisurely fashion, to reveal the quality of his mind. It is much to Mr. Beckett's credit that with the first sentence of *Murphy,* a novel written in 1938 and exhumed now as a result of the fanfares for Godot, he gives the note for all that follows. "The sun shone, having no alternative, on the nothing new," he writes; and if you enjoy that opening, if it strikes you as witty, original or profound, Mr. Beckett is almost sure to be your meat.

Murphy, by Samuel Beckett (Grove; $3.50).

The "Murphy" of his novel is a little fellow with a big vocabulary and an inflated ego, progressing reasonably from the destitution which is apt to result from an unshakeable antipathy to work, to lunacy and death by misadventure. He is craven, loveless, calculating: we learn without surprise that once he studied theology in Dublin. Now he has left his native city, finding perhaps that there were too many other Murphies in it, and settled in London. His lodgings are paid for by a relation abroad to whom, by mutual agreement, the landlady submits faked bills, the profits then being divided between them. Such ingenuity as he possesses is taken up in providing rationalizations of his incompetence and dishonesty, or devising petty means of defrauding teashops. His only faith is in horoscopes. His only interest is in the divigations of his own mind.

This "mind" of Murphy's is the subject of the book or, as the author says in one of his frequent, oracular asides to the reader, "the gravamen of these informations." The novel fails, as a novel, chiefly for that reason. A writer can be as brilliant and obscure and as agonizingly aware of the human predicament as he likes, but if he cannot create a hero of flesh and blood it is better for him not to write novels. Another cause of failure is the meanness and triviality of Murphy himself. All human souls are of equal and infinite value in the eyes of God, we are told, but to us His limited creatures they appear as astonishingly varied. Dostoevsky could have done something with this homuncule to rouse our interest or compassion, even perhaps our rueful sense of fellowship; but Mr. Beckett is not Dostoevsky. I do not believe that Mr. Beckett would wish to be Dostoevsky: Signs are not wanting that he is in the highest degree content to be Mr. Beckett.

How else, for example, are we to explain his cavalier treatment of the reader? Take it or leave it, he appears to be saying, loftily: if you don't understand, you are a fool. Long words, recondite allusions and abstruse phrases sparkle in his pages like diamonds on the finger of a nouveau riche. This pedantry, this mania for clothing simple, even commonplace, thought in fancy language is usually found among Irish writers of the Joycean school. To the normal Celtic love of obfuscation, the belief that words are for the purpose of concealment rather than of communication, they join the upstart's love of ostentation. "I've been to school if you haven't," they are telling us, perhaps with ancestral memories of the hedgerow in their minds. One of the practical results of this—and the Irish are nothing if not practical—is that they can silence hecklers by implying that they are not clever enough to understand them. By this simple technique, naturally, they range the *intelligentzia* behind them to a man.

There are no people in the book at all, but merely a number of voices, and this is how they sound:

> Wylie rose to his feet, hooked the thumb of his left hand in the armhole of his waistcoat, covered his praecordia with his right and said:
>
> "This Neary that does not love Miss Counihan, nor need his Needle, any more, may he soon get over Murphy and find himself free, following his drift, to itch for an ape, or a woman writer."
>
> "But this is Old Moore," said Miss Counihan, "not the *Weekly Irish Times.*"
>
> "My attitude," said Wylie, "being the auscultation, execution and adequation of the voices, or rather voice, of Reason and Philautia, does not change. I continue to regard this Neary as a bull Io, born to be stung, Nature's gift to necessitous pimps; Miss Counihan as the only nubile amateur to my certain knowledge in the Twenty-Six Counties who does not confuse herself with her body, and one of the few bodies, in the same bog, equal to the distinction Murphy as a vermin at all costs to be avoided—"
>
> Miss Counihan and Neary laughed profusely.

How vividly the dialogue, the puns, the cautious obscenities, the paranoiac emanations of the whole book call to mind evenings spent with the *literati* in Dublin, with the rain pattering down outside and the black beer flowing within, frustrated genius abounding and, if possible, an English or American visitor to be mesmerized by the pseudo-brilliance!

NOW and again there is a touch of humor or pathos, a flash of wit and even of poetry; but on the whole this is a dull pretentious piece of writing. It would serve to pass an evening but, as Mr. Beckett would tell us, an evening passes anyway.

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The Gamble for Freedom in Hungary

by George N. Shuster

THIS book is not a diary, but a reconstruction of a student's part in the Hungarian uprisings based on notes, drawings and recollections. Beke is an assumed name. Though not written with the help of a telephoto lens and so in no sense a history of a few fateful days in the life of a nation, it has that rare quality of simplicity which has always been a characteristic of first-hand accounts of tragedy written by young people. Let me add that every trustworthy refugee from Budapest with whom I have talked has paid tribute to its accuracy and pertinence. Unforgettable is the fact that things happen in it without warning, just as they do in a dream. Doubtless, when all is said and done, that is what the Hungarian revolt of last year was—a dream which came true for a little while and then ended in a nightmare.

A Student's Diary: Budapest, October 16 - November 1, 1956, by Laszlo Beke, edited and translated by Leon Kossar and Ralph M. Zoltan (Viking; $1.95).

In planned Communist societies, such as Hungary was, everything ought to follow logically from cause to effect. That still seemed to hold true as of October, 1956. Art majors at the University of Budapest were under the thumbs of Party functionaries who had selected them, tested them over and over again for loyalty, and given them scholarships. But, as Beke says, the stipends meant that "they never ate on Sundays, for that day the cafeteria was closed." Failure to attend Party meetings meant dismissal. And so when the news of student protests in Poland's Posnan trickled into Hungary forty-three young people picked their way carefully to a meadow outside the city for a secret meeting which elected a Student Council. They were, of course, thoroughly fed up. Their desire was to be Hungarian and free, they detested those of their professors who were Communists, and they had identified paradise with life in the West—though, one gathers, primarily in the outline suggested by the BBC.

The Student Council did not take the government's "NO" to a request for a conference lying down. They got hold of a printing press and prepared leaflets for distribution. By four o'clock on the afternoon of October 26, 12,000 students were on the march, and by the time they reached their place of rendezvous—Bem Square, so named for a Polish hero—many times that number of citizens, including women and children, had joined their ranks. Now everywhere flags were in the air with the Communist stars cut out of them. Somebody sang the great patriotic hymn written by the poet Petofi. Up to this point events had taken a course a great deal like the early stages of what happened in East Berlin during June, 1953. Only this time the initial core of demonstrators was made up not of workers but of young intellectuals.

Having hauled a great statute of Stalin from its pedestal and pounded it to shreds, the crowd moved on to the Parliament Building, to demand that Imre Nagy, the Communist leader identified with a policy of moderation, address them. He did so, but manifestly under strict surveillance. From this moment on, Beke and his companions began to take a dim view of Nagy and of what the Party would agree to do. Herein may perhaps be seen the principal reason why the uprising in Hungary took so different a turn from what it did in Poland. There Gomulka, released from prison, inspired confidence. In Budapest, however, disillusionment spread, though at first only because it was assumed that Nagy would not be given a free hand.

Meanwhile the great mass of marching citizens moved on to the radio station with the idea that news of what the students had started would be broadcast to the nation. But in response to a request for admission, the Secret Police fired on the crowd. The square was littered with dead. Almost in an instant, with the connivance of the city police, the army and bands of workers from the armament factory of Csepel, the crowd was turned into a revolutionary mob, armed and bent on vengeance. By three of the next morning, the radio station had been captured. Thenceforth the hunt for the Secret Police was on, to run its course from street to street, house to house. The liberators opened prisons, organized peasants and workers. Russian garrison troops moved into the fray and, as has often been reported, the children of Budapest, taught methods of fighting off Western tanks, fought the men from the East, triumphed and died.

BEKE'S account does not stress the few blissful days of liberation. Apparently the full meaning of these did not trickle down to the boys and girls who had staked their lives on the gamble for freedom. Cardinal Mindszenty had been freed and come to Budapest. People who had been in jail or in hiding came out to bask in the light of the common day. The news was, however, ominous. The Russians were not going to leave Hungary, were as a matter of fact massing combat troops. Hope for help from the West was illusory. On the afternoon of October 31, the Student Council held a meeting. Of the 47 present, 30 decided to remain in Budapest. The others chose to leave while egress was still possible or were undecided. Beke says that he shortly afterward made up his mind to flee because his wife was pregnant and ill. No one knows what happened to those who stayed. The horror story moved on to its finale.

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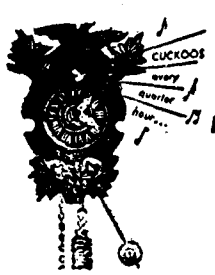

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RECORDS

Singers and Players

TEBALDI has one of the most beautiful soprano voices one can hear today; and her idea of what to do in an opera is to show off that voice in phrases which she lingers over for the purpose, with a complete disregard for the damage to their continuity that is shared by the frenzied audiences in the Metropolitan. She does this lovely-sounding, self-indulgent singing in *"D'amor sull'ali rosee"* in the recorded *Il Trovatore* on London XLLA-50; and if it is irritating to the mind it is at least a pleasure to the ear; whereas the dry, tight, rasping tenor that Del Monaco exhibits in *"Ah si, ben mio"* is the unpleasantest I can recall hearing on a major operatic stage. Savarese's baritone also isn't agreeable; and it is only from Simionato and Tozzi that we get first-class vocal performance. Erede is not a forceful conductor of Verdi; and the sound of the orchestra and chorus suffers from the cavernously overresonant recording.

One thing that makes the Milan La Scala *Trovatore* on Angel 3554 outstanding is the playing of the orchestral part under Von Karajan's direction—the precision and refinement of execution and tone, the expressiveness of the phrasing, the power of the larger shaping. Callas' high notes wobble and are unlovely, but the middle and low range is steady, its unusual timbre is beautiful and compelling, and the dramatically expressive singing exhibits the unfailing concern with the musical phrase that Tebaldi's does not. Di Stefano, Barbieri and Panerai have fine voices; but Di Stefano sings in an irritatingly mannered style, and Barbieri's tempestuous singing produces sounds that are unfocused and clouded by tremolo.

The playing of the orchestral part, enlivened by Beecham's characteristic dynamic phrasing, is also an outstanding feature of the *Abduction from the Seraglio* on Angel 3555. Another is the ear-ravishing singing of Simoneau (Belmonte); and there is excellent singing by Hollweg (Blonde) and Unger (Pedrillo). But the performance is flawed by the unlovely and quavering voice of Lois Marshall (Constanze).

Simoneau's singing is similarly beautiful and moving in Gluck's French version of his *Orpheus and Eurydice,* which has a tenor in the title role in place of the contralto of the original Italian version. The performance on Epic SC-6019 also offers lovely singing by Danco and Alarie; but Rosbaud's conducting is pedestrian.

A guest for whom I once played Tebaldi's performance of the "Willow Song" and "Ave Maria" from the London recording of *Otello* suggested afterward that we listen to the old Rethberg record of the two pieces. Tebaldi had given us an artful deployment of a luscious voice; from Rethberg we got a simple, direct emission of her exquisitely pure voice in continuous, sustained singing of the musical phrases that articulated and shaped them into wonderfully beautiful statements of the music. Excited by what we had heard, we wondered at the fact that these great Rethberg performances had not been included on any of Victor's records devoted to outstanding singers of the past; but now at last Camden 335, *The Art of Elisabeth Rethberg,* offers that beautiful art not only in the two *Otello* excerpts but in the two arias from *Un Ballo in Maschera,* Mozart's *"L'amero, saro costante,"* the *"Roi de Thulé"* from *Faust,* and the Czardas from *Die Fledermaus,* among other things. Will Victor now please give us a record devoted to the art of Frieda Hempel, and this one without the peaking of treble that adds a fake brightness to Rethberg's voice and the echo-chamber resonance that puts a fake gloss on it.

Like Rethberg's in its simple, direct operation is Flagstad's singing of Wagner's Wesendonck songs with the Vienna Philharmonic under Knappertsbusch on London LL-1533; and her seemingly natural, effortless way of producing the musical phrases in lustrous vocal sound gives us some of the greatest singing we can hear today. We get it also in the last few of the Schubert and Schumann songs on London LL-1546; but the others seem to have been recorded on a day when Flagstad's voice didn't operate with the same mastery to produce the same musical result.

The late Kathleen Ferrier's deployment of her sumptuous contralto in the long phrases of Schubert's *An die Musik* achieves an outstanding performance of this song on London LL-1520, which offers in addition her beautiful singing of Schubert's *Gretchen am Spinnrade, Der Musensohn* and *Die junge Nonne,* Schumann's *Widmung* and *Volksliedchen,* and arias from Gluck's *Orfeo* and Handel's *Xerxes* and *Rodelinda* (the orchestral sound isn't bright and clean in the last piece). And the lovely soprano of De los Angeles is heard on Victor LM-1920 in the entire opening scene of Act 4 of *Otello* and in arias from *Ernani, Cenerentola, Mefistofele* and operas of Catalani, Mascagni and Puccini.

THE excellence of the performance of Mozart's Violin Concerto K.219 on Capitol P-8362 is not only Milstein's luminous tone and unaffected phrasing but the wonderfully enlivened orchestral context created around his playing by the superb orchestra under Harry Blech; and a similarly fine performance of Bach's A minor is on the reverse side. The orchestra's sound is muffled.

It is now 20 years since Benny Goodman was talked into trying to play Mozart; and his performances of the Clarinet Concerto K.622 with the Boston Symphony under Munch and the Clarinet Quintet K.581 with the Boston Symphony Quartet, on Victor LM-2073, demonstrate that now, as 20 years ago, all Goodman can do is produce a succession of big, round, clear sounds that are pretty much alike. If he will listen to De Peyer's subtleties of tone and phrasing in the performance of the concerto on London LL-1135, perhaps he will realize at last that what he can do is not enough.

B. H. HAGGIN

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ART

The Big Band Jazz of Stuart Davis

A BIG Stuart Davis show is good news anytime. The major Davis exhibition that is now at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, and will visit Des Moines and San Francisco during the summer, opening the Whitney's fall season, is particularly good. For one thing, it set as its mark the assembling of all the important Davis paintings of the last ten years and has come within an ace of pulling that off. For another, the timing is excellent. American painting right now is in the process of digesting some of the wilder discoveries of the last decade, of absorbing, for example, the large scale finger painting of Pollock and discovering how this relates to the essential purposes of art. Davis is good for this moment because Davis set out on a somewhat similar quest himself and achieved a brilliant success.

Davis was born into the continuing revolution that has been going on in American art since the century began. His father was the Philadelphia art editor who employed Luks, Glackens, Sloan and Shinn as newspaper artists. The "Eight" were friends of the family. Davis' first teacher was Robert Henri. At the age of nineteen, the boy was regarded as competent enough to have five water colors in the 1913 Armory Show.

The European section of that monumental exhibition — particularly van Gogh and Matisse — changed his life. He saw at once that the "new painting" of the ash can school was purely a change of subject matter, that, in the words of H. H. Arnason in the present catalogue, "as a revolutionary in art he was 60 years behind the times." The exhibition at the Walker is largely the record of what happened after the gap was closed, but there are enough pictures from 1925 to 1945 to sketch in the development of what is at once a highly personal style and a classic expression of modern art in America.

The "in America" is important. Davis, against his will classified as an abstract artist, has always insisted on the importance of subject matter and his own subject matter is violently American. It is, more than anything, the color and tempo of the American city. Whereas cubism, in Europe, was an intimate record of private moments —the guitar, the bottle, the vase of flowers—what there is of cubism in Davis is based on the rhythm of the traffic light, the neon flash, the spot pattern on the "Leader" strip of a movie film. The subject matter is public property and indeed public events. Here Davis is faithful to the ash can painters, who also concentrated on the public scene. The utter lack of privacy that is part of the pathos in Sloan is taken for granted in Davis' work. It is worth recalling, too, how many of Eakins most important paintings deal with public events—the concert performances, the prize fight, the boat race, the surgical demonstration.

DAVIS himself has acknowledged his debt to American jazz—and big band jazz of the Benny Goodman type. The music is fast and precise. And there are no blues in the Davis jazzland.

As jazz gets much of its power from the tension between the syncopated beat of the melodic line and the inexorable ground beat of the rhythm instruments, so Davis uses over and over again with infinite variety the same kind of tension between the square or rectangle as a ground beat and the rough curve or arc as syncopation. More obviously than most paintings, a major Davis work has to be viewed through time as well as space. He also plays plane against recession to produce and hold tension.

A remarkably clear example of these several characteristics is the 32-foot mural, "Allée," which, lent by Drake University, is, by sheer size, the dominant piece at the Walker. On a blue ground, squares and rectangles of red-orange, white and blue flash across the right side of the work, resolved in larger and fewer repetitions of the forms on the left. Also moving across is a series of flattened rounds, varying between the shape of a stop sign and that of a television screen. All of these shapes are either in the wall plane or parallel to it and not very deep. Just off center to the left, a sea of blue interrupts the steady beat of the whole and floating in the sea are the same color planes but now tilted for depth. Appropriately, the spot is marked by a great red X.

A kind of jazz footnote to the spirit of joy in Stuart Davis' work is his way with words. He uses them in the paintings, usually as form but sometimes for their meaning, as in his famous phrase, "The Amazing Continuity," which appears on the right side of a large horizontal otherwise consisting largely of the word "Champion" in heroic letters. He also writes well on art, striking an irony in prose that fairly reflects his free-wheeling use of certain reverenced conventions of modern European painting, notably the Braque positive-negative juxtaposition of forms and colors. Finally he is the only American painter whose titles occasionally touch pure genius and this again is the jazz connection: "Rapt at Rappaport's," for example, or "Owh! In San Pao."

Concerning the latter, Davis wrote:

> It has been scientifically established that the acoustics of Idealism give off the Humanistic Sounds of Snoring, whereas Reality always says, "Ouch!"

Reality does, all right, but the Ouch in Davis' paintings of reality is the Ouch of art, where pain is pleasure.

GILBERT CHESTERTON once wrote of the Times Square nightscape, "How beautiful—for one who could not read." One measure of Davis' achievement is that he reveals the beauty of Broadway even to the literate.

FRANK GETLEIN

Notes on Contributors

VICTOR LANGE is professor of German at Cornell University. HAYDEN CARRUTH, who recently won the Vachel Lindsay prize, is writing a book about Ezra Pound. JAY LEYDA'S documentary biography, *The Years and Hours of Emily Dickinson*, will be published in 1958 by the Yale University Press. HONOR TRACY'S newest novel is *The Straight and Narrow Path*. GEORGE N. SHUSTER, president of Hunter College, is the author of *In Silence I Speak*, a biography of Cardinal Mindszenty. B. H. HAGGIN'S most recent book is *The Listener's Musical Companion*. FRANK GETLEIN is art critic of *The Milwaukee Journal*.

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Books in Brief

Freedom Is As Freedom Does: Civil Liberties Today, by Corliss Lamont (Horizon; $3.95).

INTRODUCED by Bertrand Russell for the British edition with a false cry of alarm for American liberties, Corliss Lamont has brought out a second edition of his survey of "civil liberties since 1944." It is not an over-all survey but is confined to the victims of McCarthyism and the anti-Communist security obsession. And it is largely colored by Dr. Lamont's own clashes with McCarthy, the State Department and his ex-colleagues in the board of the American Civil Liberties Union over anti-Communist declarations. Dr. Lamont's object, he says, is to alert us to the dangers which confront us. He comes to the fray a bit late when those dangers, as he admits, are declining. Though no Communist, he nevertheless is almost wholly concerned with the attack on Communists and real or assumed fellow-travelers.

It is only fair to observe that in principle Dr. Lamont is for everybody's liberties, but his selection of issues and cases conveys an air of special pleading. It has the merit, however, of revealing the contradictory personal philosophy of a man of principle and public spirit who is devoted at one and the same time to civil liberties, Soviet socialism (with reservations) and the interests of the non-Party but not anti-Communist American left. ROGER BALDWIN

•

A Dictionary of American-English Usage, based on Fowler's *Modern English Usage*, by Margaret Nicholson (Oxford; $5).

ANYONE who presumes to tinker with Fowler invites the fate of Uzza, who laid unhallowed hands on the Ark of the Covenant and was struck dead for his trespass. But Margaret Nicholson really deserves a better fate. She does not cherish the delusion that she can improve Fowler and she has preserved his superbly astringent little essays, but she has pointed out where American usage differs from British, as, for instance, in preferring "buncombe" to "bunkum," and in noting that what is between the vertebrae is a "disc" but what goes on your phonograph is a "disk," where Fowler simply notes that the latter is the older and better form. If she had done nothing else, this reviewer would applaud her for putting a firm "not recommended" on the hideous locution, "different than." On "buck" she adds to Fowler's definition the caution that it is not to be applied to elk or moose (bull) but omits the strictly American application to a male Negro slave. Nor does she do anything with "poke" meaning "sack" or with the useful collective pronoun "you-all" replacing the archaic "ye." Still, her production is a useful work, provided always that it stand alongside the original Fowler. G.W.J.

•

The People Win Through, by U Nu, with an introduction by Edward Hunter (Taplinger; $3.75).

"IF the King of Siam can compose music," Burma's Premier U Nu once jocularly remarked, "why can't I write plays?" Yet this is no dilettante exercise of a politician turned playwright. It was deadly serious business for U Nu when he wrote it in 1950 as an anti-Communist propaganda piece. First distributed in mimeographed form to local dramatic troupes, it was performed clandestinely throughout Burma at a time when civil war still raged in the land and Communist terrorism was still very much of a present danger. The play is a polemic against the capture of power by force, recounting the Burmese people's rebuff of a Communist insurrection. As Edward Hunter tells us in a long and informative introduction, which is also an effective introduction to Burma itself, U Nu's historic work is now studied in all Burmese highschools. S.S.H.

A Communication

(*Continued from page 3*)

Nasser provide a solution to "the many problems of the Middle East"? Hardly. The "thesis that the elimination of Nasser is all that is needed to solve the problems of the Middle East" is nowhere to be found in the article. It is not my thesis. However, I am in favor of frustrating Nasser in certain respects.

Mr. Crewson says the article offers, as an alternative to the Eisenhower approach, "Halle's" approach, which "means a 'clash'." The article offers nothing of the sort. It does not address itself to what should be done. What I have elsewhere publicly advocated, however, is measures to make the West independent of the Suez Canal, thereby incidentally creating the bargaining power which we otherwise lack in our negotiations with Nasser.

"Is any settlement achieved by negotiation an illustration of appeasement?" No, it is not. However, a negotiated surrender might be.

"Halle claims that our present policy will put our friends and supporters . . . at Nasser's mercy?" This omits qualification and context. In speculating about the Administration's mental approach to the problem the article said: "Perhaps our own friends and supporters have to be put at Nasser's mercy in the Suez business." It may be that this has already happened, though I think it too early to abandon hope.

LOUIS J. HALLE

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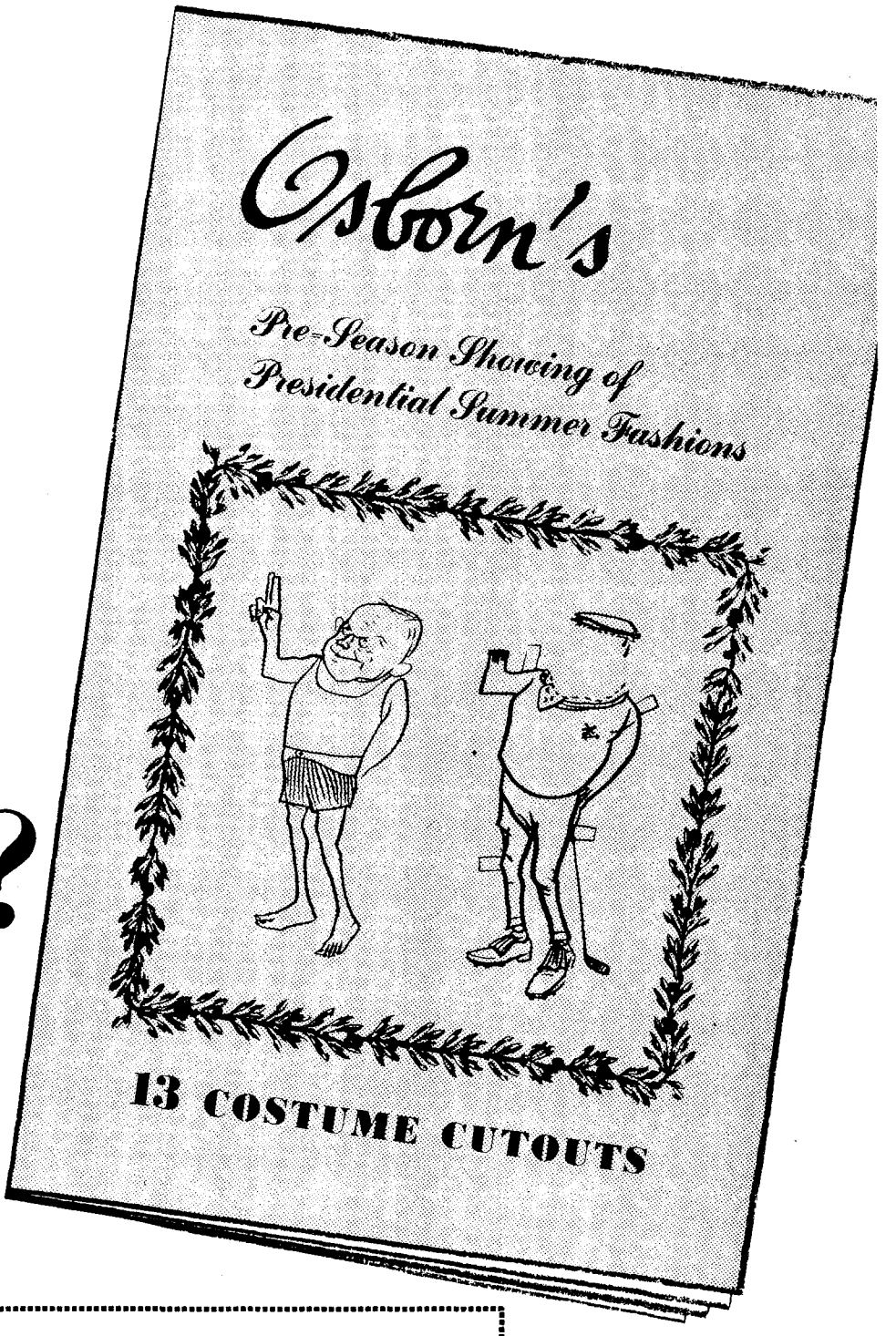

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